



Puppy Information Sheet

Congratulations on your new puppy. Since puppies require a lot of care, we have put together this outline of services we recommend for the health and long life of your new friend. Although there are similarities between puppies and babies, please remember that your dog is not a person in a fur coat. They do not speak our language and aren't very verbal. However, they are fluent in body language, so communicate with your facial expressions and gentle handling, as well as your voice.

1. Feed a brand name, complete and balanced puppy chow three times daily until the pup is 4 months old. Moisten with water or add a little canned food to flavor. From 4- 8 months feed the puppy chow twice a day, am and pm. At 8-10 months, slowly change to adult chow and stay with two feedings per day.
2. Vaccine schedule: Vaccines are given monthly until 4 months of age because a puppy's immune system is not fully developed until that time. DHPP (Distemper combo), Rabies, Lyme and Kennel Cough are the usual vaccines given depending upon your puppy's risk factors.
3. Heartworm disease is transmitted by mosquitoes. Puppies over 6 months old should be blood tested prior to being given preventative medication. Once given, the preventative should be given on a monthly basis. Puppies less than 6 months of age cannot be adequately tested due to the lifecycle of the heartworm. However, they should be given preventative medication from 8 weeks of age and then blood tested sometime between 6 months and 1 year of age.
4. Neutering: Unless you plan to breed professionally, you should have your puppy spayed (female) or castrated (male) at 5-6 months of age. There are several important medical advantages to early neutering, in addition to helping solve the critical over-population problem. *Millions* of dogs and cats are euthanized each year in this country simply because there are no homes for them. Owning a breeding bitch or stud is a time and money consuming occupation. Please be a responsible pet owner and have yours neutered.
5. Most puppies are born with intestinal parasites (roundworm and hookworm) and can acquire other worms (whipworm) from the environment or from fleas (tapeworm). A fecal sample should be conducted at 8 weeks of age to check for intestinal parasites.
6. Fleas are the number one reason for an itchy dog. Once a month topical flea/tick preventatives can and should be used on puppies from 8 weeks of age.

7. Housebreaking is most easily accomplished by crate training. This is useful for the mature dog as well, especially if you travel with your dog or plan to show. A crate-trained dog does not experience cage stress when boarding or hospitalized, since they are already used to being in their “room”. Being confined motivates the pup to ask to go out. A designated outdoor area should be used as the “potty”, so the pup will understand what is expected when you take them there. You can even teach them to eliminate on command. Pups need to go out when they first come out of the crate, after eating or drinking, after playing hard and after a nap. This usually means every 15-30 minutes.
8. Puppies must be well socialized before they are 4 months old. They need regular baths, brushing and nail-trims. You need to expose your puppy to other people, including children, other animals, car rides, loud noises, etc. We recommend a basic obedience class for all pups. Cesar Millan, *The Dog Whisperer*, recommends:
 1. *Regular leash walks with your pup so they will naturally follow your lead as their “calm, assertive pack leader”.*
 2. *“If you don’t like what the pup is doing, teach it to do something else” (i.e. if they are jumping on you, teach them to sit).*
 3. *If you don’t want a behavior when your dog is an adult, don’t let them do it as a pup (what is cute at 10lbs isn’t at 100 lbs!)*
 4. *Teach tricks that encourage socialization: shake paws, wag tail on command, roll-over, fetch, etc.*
9. Toys should be solid, of non-shreddable materials, and large enough so your pup can’t possibly swallow one. Always leave a toy in the crate with your pup. One of the best toys is a “Kong” or “Tuffy”. It comes in various sizes and is made of hard rubber in a bell shape. It bounces in different directions when you throw it, and is hollow. You can stuff the “Kong” with various sizes and shapes of treats and/or kibble. Getting treats from the toy will distract them from your departure and gives them something to do while you are gone (hopefully instead of barking, chewing, wetting, etc.)
10. Exercise is very important for your new pup. Daily walks and play sessions will make a healthy bond and a calm nature. It is also a great way to socialize your pup. A tired pup is a sleepy pup, and a sleepy pup makes a happy owner.